



Special Interest Articles:

- Child Care Licensing Battles Cold Weather
- 14 Ways to Show Love for Your Child this Valentine's Day
- Inspectors Move to Neighborhood City Halls

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From the Director's Chair...

Welcome to the 4th edition of the newsletter. Each month we feature an Environmental Health program or project. To date we have featured, the Water Center, Food, and Animal Control. This month the featured program is the Child Day Care Licensing program.



Child Care Licensing Battles Cold Weather Fears

With the onslaught of cold weather and freezing temperatures, many parents brace themselves for the inevitable onslaught of colds and illnesses. They bundle their offspring up and leave them at the Childcare Providers home, with parting comments like "Keep them inside, OK? I don't want them to catch a cold."

Every year calls come into the Health Department from over-wrought parents whose child was taken outside to play in the cold or the snow, and the Childcare Licensing staff begins the process of dispelling the "Cold Weather Fears".

1. **"If my child plays out in the snow he might catch a Cold"** - A Cold is a virus. Children sharing close quarters, as they do in child care centers and homes, are at high risk for getting and transmitting bacterial and viral infections. Good hand washing techniques are the best defense from passing illness from person to person, but a healthy body with a strong immune system is the individual's best defense. Fresh air, sunshine, and exercise are all important factors in building strong bodies. You can't catch a

Cold from the cold.

2. **"It was 30 degrees out and they made the children go outside. That's below freezing!"**

- The KDHE regulations require daily outdoor play for all children in out-of-home-care. Children should be dressed appropriately before going out to play. Parents must provide warm coats, hats, gloves, and boots (if there is snow). The provider should call the Weather Line to determine the current temperature and wind chill factor. Whether it is safe for children to go out and for how long can then be determined. Even if the children go out for five minutes to breathe fresh air, feel the sunshine, and work their muscles, it is beneficial, not detrimental.

3. **"My child is already ill with a Cold. I don't want them to go outside"** - Children exhibiting symptoms of illness must be excluded from care for the good of all the children. If the physician diagnoses and treats an illness, and then releases the child (in writing) back into childcare, then arrangements can be made to supervise the recuperating child until they are back to full, good

health. Alternate activities must be given to the child so they do not feel "punished" by not getting to go outside to play.

Concerned parents are reminded that the Childcare provider is a professional. They are aware of the dangers and the benefits of outdoor play for children. Parents may not consider that snow can cover and hide hidden dangers from sharp ice formations to broken equipment and tripping hazards. Wet equipment becomes slippery. Moist skin can stick to cold metal play equipment, and plastic toys can crack and break in the extreme cold or heat of the outdoor play area. The impact absorbing ability of the surface material under climbing equipment can also change and become dangerous when water and ice invade it. The professional childcare provider is aware of all these considerations and takes steps to either avoid or correct them prior to the children playing outside.

Children love to play outside. Don't let your fears keep them from having a safe, fun, healthy time.

14 Ways to Show Love for Your Child This Valentine's Day



✱ There are approx.
712,933 Kansas
children under 18
years of age
✱ 73% of children less
than 6 years old had
both parents working in
2000
(2001 Kansas Census)

- Use plenty of positive words with your child.
- Respond promptly and lovingly to your child's physical and emotional needs and banish put-downs from your parenting vocabulary.
- Make an extra effort to set a good example at home and in public. Use words like "I'm sorry," "please," and "thank you."
- When your child is angry, argumentative or in a bad mood, give him a hug, cuddle, pat, secret sign or other gesture of affection he favors.
- Use non-violent forms of discipline. Parents should begin instituting both rewards and restrictions many years before adolescence to prevent trouble during the teenage years. Once youngsters reach adolescence, allowing them to break important rules constantly without being disciplined only encourages more rule violations.
- Make plans to spend half a day alone with your young child or teen doing something he enjoys.
- Mark family game nights on your calendar so the entire family can be together. Put a different

- family member's name under each date, and have that person choose which game will be played that evening.
- Owning a pet can make children, and especially those with chronic illnesses and disabilities, feel better by stimulating physical activity, enhancing their overall attitude, and offering constant companionship.
- One of the best ways to familiarize your child with good food choices is to encourage him to cook with you. Let him get involved in the entire process, from planning the menus to shopping for ingredients to the actual food preparation and its serving.
- As your child grows up, she'll spend most of her time developing and refining a variety of skills and abilities in all areas of her life. You should help her as much as possible by encouraging her and providing the equipment and instruction she needs.
- Your child's health depends significantly on the care and guidance you offer during his early years. By taking your child to the doctor regularly for

- consultations, keeping him safe from accidents, providing a nutritious diet, and encouraging exercise throughout childhood, you help protect and strengthen his body.
 - Regardless of whether you actively try to pass on your values and beliefs to your child, he is bound to absorb some of them just by living with you. He'll notice how disciplined you are in your work, how deeply you hold your beliefs and whether you practice what you preach.
 - One of your most important gifts as a parent is to help your child develop self-esteem. Your child needs your steady support and encouragement to discover his strengths. He needs you to believe in him as he learns to believe in himself. Loving him, spending time with him, listening to him and praising his accomplishments are all part of this process.
 - Don't forget to say, "I love you" to children of all ages!
- (c) 2004 American Academy of Pediatrics.

WATER Center Receives Awards

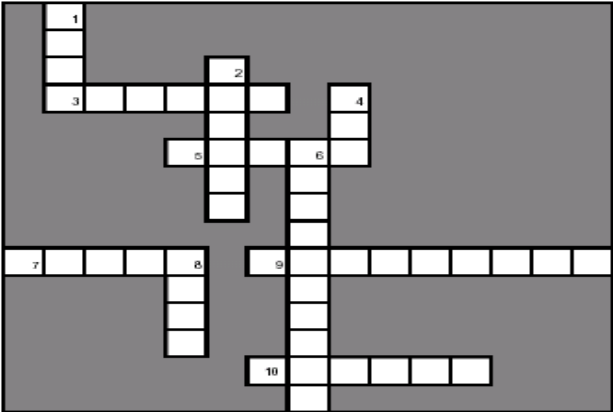


The WATER Center project has been the recent recipient of three awards. CDM, consultants for the project, submitted and received the 2004 Kansas Consulting Engineers

Engineering Excellence Award, Environmental Category. The Kansas Chapter of the American Concrete Institute presented Gossen-Livingston Architects with the 2003 Concrete Construction

Award for Technical Innovation. Lastly, the Department of Environmental Health received the 2003 Water Conservationist Award. Congratulations to all those involved!

POLLUTION PUZZLE



by Kyle Harrington

How many clues can you figure out?

ACROSS

3. Wood comes from a _____.

5. Two-thirds of the earth is covered with _____.

7. A _____ is formed when water evaporates.

9. _____ destroys oceans, kills plants and wildlife, and is bad for our earth.

10. The Sahara is a famous _____.

DOWN

1. A _____ between two cultures.

2. A piece of land surrounded by water on all sides is an _____.

4. A lark flew into the _____.

6. When water on earth returns to the atmosphere, it _____.

8. Soil is another word for _____.

Home Show 2004



Anyone who has lived in Wichita for a while knows that February is Home Show month. The Health Department has participated in this event for many years. We have a booth, along with about 11 other city and county agencies, in a display area called City/County Services. Each year planning for this event starts in January as we gear up to make ourselves more visible to the public. Just about every program in Environmental Health is represented through brochures and other informational handouts and displays in our booth. This year we put a special emphasis on the Water Center, the City's newest facility. Our booth is staffed by volunteer exempt personnel who each spend 3 hours at the booth handing out literature and the answering questions of those who stop in. Thanks to the input of talented staff, we have a nice-looking display this year.

Inspectors Move to Neighborhood City Halls



January marked the relocation of four Environmental Maintenance (premise condition) inspectors to the Neighborhood City Halls. The move is intended to allow residents easier access to staff, and provide better opportunities for staff interaction with Office of Central Inspection staff, Community Police officers, and Neighborhood Assistants. Kristie Yeager will be based at the Atwater NCH, 2755

E. Nineteenth, and Shane Hackworth will be stationed at the Evergreen NCH, 2700 N. Woodland. Erin Brady's office will be located at the Colvin NCH, 2820 S. Roosevelt, and Keith Hall will work from the Stanley-Aley NCH, 1749 S. Martinson. Charles Anderson and Dan Rutledge will maintain their current offices at the Environmental Health Department building, 1900 E. Ninth.

Inspectors will

establish regular office hours at the Neighborhood City Halls to meet with citizens and other City staff, return telephone calls, and log case information on the City's TideMark database. Daily contacts at the Environmental Health office will allow coordination with supervisory and management staff, coordination with other Environmental Health programs.

Published by:

City of Wichita
Department of
Environmental Health
www.wichitaenvironment.org

1900 E. 9th
Wichita, KS
67214

PHONE:
(316) 268-8351

FAX:
(316) 268-8390



Director
Jack Brown

**Environmental
Services Supervisor**
Roger Smith

**Environmental
Compliance Manager**
Kay Johnson

Editor:
Libby Albers
Nancy Jensen

Contributors:
Mark Bradshaw
Dennis Graves
Shirley O'Dell R.N.
Roger Smith
Maurice Terrabone

We're on the Web!

See us at:
www.wichitaenvironment.org

January is National Radon Action Month

EPA and organizations nationwide dedicate January as National Radon Action Month to encourage the public to test their homes for radon. Did you know?

-Radon is the second leading cause of lung cancer

-Nearly one in 15 homes in the U.S. has high levels of indoor radon

-The U.S. Surgeon General and EPA recommend all homes be tested for radon

-Homes with high radon levels can be fixed.

Radon can be a

homes, new homes, drafty homes, insulated homes, homes with basements and homes without basements. Testing your home for radon is the only way for you and your family to know if radon levels are dangerously high. Many people don't know that reliable radon tests can be purchased at some local hardware stores and from the National Radon Hotline at 1-800-SOS-RADON (1-800-767-7236)

Radon is dangerous because it cannot be

Radon is a decay product of uranium and occurs naturally in soil and rock and therefore radon levels can vary home to home. Other sources of radon include well water and building materials.

Radon is a radioactive gas and has been identified as a leading cause of lung cancer, second only to cigarette smoking in the U.S. EPA's most recent health risk assessment estimates that 21,000 lung cancer deaths each year are due to radon. Click on EPA.gov for more information.

Many people City Employees Receive Discount At The Animal Shelter

Looking for a lifelong friend? Longing for someone to greet you at the door and never leave your side? If so, visit the Wichita Animal Shelter and Adoption Center. In addition to the many types of animals available, another incentive is City employees qualify for waiver of the \$10.00 adoption fee! This means you can have a companion that never

complains about what you wear, thinks your ideas are the best, and treats you like the greatest thing since sliced bread, living right there in your home!

Adoptions from the Shelter can be as low as \$58.00, and adoption costs are redeemable for necessary medical services at most area veterinarians via our vouchers. If your veterinarian doesn't accept our vouchers, never fear, just provide proof that the

animal has received the appropriate vet care and we will refund your money directly to you! You can't go wrong with a pet from the Wichita Animal Shelter and Adoption Center. You get the satisfaction of knowing you have saved a life, and with a discount it's an even better deal!

About Our Department...

The mission of the Department of Environmental Health is *Protecting People... Preserving the Environment*. This mission is realized through our services, programs and projects that focus on environmental monitoring, code enforcement, and education.

